

1            CLAIMS

2            1. A protective case for a stringed instrument comprising:

3                a) a housing that includes a base part and a top part connected to the base  
part by a mechanism that enables the opening and closing of the housing;

4                b) the base part having an area to store a stringed instrument, said area  
5                having soft means for supporting all or parts of the lateral exterior surface of the back of  
6                said stringed instrument, said soft means elevating said instrument in said case, and  
7                protecting the central portion of the back of said instrument from contact with the interior  
8                of said case.

1            2. A protective case for a stringed instrument comprising:

2                a) a housing that includes a base part and a top part connected to the base  
part by a mechanism that enables the housing to be opened and closed;

3                b) the top part having an area overlying a stringed instrument that is stored  
4                in the base part, said area overlying said stringed instrument having a soft material  
5                located adjacent to all or parts of the lateral surface area of the sound board of said  
6                stringed instrument, said soft material being positioned to prevent the central anterior  
7                surface of said stringed instrument from coming in contact with the interior of said  
8                protective case when said case is closed.

1            3. A protective case for a stringed instrument comprising:

2                a) a housing comprised of two separate parts including a base part and a top  
3                part;

4                b) a mechanism allowing for the opening and closing of said housing;

5                c) the base part having an area to store a stringed instrument and a plurality  
6                of padded means, said padded means being rotatably connected with one end to said base  
7                part, said rotational connection allowing for the other end of said padded means to be  
8                reversibly shifted over portions of said stringed instrument, securing said instrument in  
9                said storage area of said base part.

1            4. The protective case as in claim 1, having padded means as in claim 3.

- 1       5.     The protective case as in claim 2, having padded means as in claim 3.
- 1       6.     A protective case for a stringed instrument comprising:  
2           a)     a base part and a top part removably connected together and together  
3           defining a housing that can be opened and closed;  
4           b)     the base part having an area to store a stringed instrument, and a plurality  
5           of securing means, said securing means being connected with one end to a portion of said  
6           base part, and being reversibly connected with their other end to a different portion of  
7           said base part, crossing over the body of said instrument, and enabling it to be secured  
8           to said base part.
- 1       7.     The protective case as in claim 1, having protective means as in claim 6.
- 1       8.     The protective case as in claim 2, having protective means as in claim 6.
- 1       9.     A case for housing and protecting a stringed wooden instrument that has a sound  
board, a back, neck, strings, a bridge and an angulated lateral portion that connects  
peripheral portions of the sound board and the back, comprising:  
1           a)     a housing that is comprised of a pair of shells of rigid material including  
5           a lower base shell and an upper cover shell half, each of the shells having a hard inner  
6           surface;  
7           b)     a plurality of links for holding the shells together in a closed position;  
8           c)     a protective liner that lines each of the shells;  
9           d)     the liners including a first liner that includes a first layer of material in the  
10          base shell that engages the instrument back peripheral portion and spaces the instrument  
11          back away from the inner surface of the base shell and a second layer of material in the  
12          base shell that cradles the periphery of the stringed instrument at its angulated lateral  
13          portion;  
14           e)     the liners including a third layer of material that is contained in the cover  
15          shell that engages the sound board peripheral portion in the closed position; and

16                   f)         the base shell having a recess that is shaped to receive the neck.

1                 10.      The stringed instrument case of claim 1 wherein the links include at least one  
2                   hinge.

1                 11.      The stringed instrument case of claim 1 wherein the links include at least one  
2                   closure clasp.

1                 12.      The stringed instrument case of claim 1 wherein the shells are of a material  
2                   selected from the group that comprises wood, metal and plastic.

1                 13.      The stringed instrument case of claim 1 wherein third layer of material cradles the  
2                   sound board in the closed position and a portion of the angulated lateral portion.

1                 14.      The stringed instrument case of claim 1 further comprising a plurality of clamps  
2                   that hold the instrument back into contact with the first layer of material.

1                 15.      The stringed instrument case of claim 1 further comprising at least one rack for  
2                   supporting a stringed instrument bow.

1                 16.      The stringed instrument case of claim 1 wherein the third layer of material has a  
2                   void space that is sized and shaped to receive the strings and bridge of the stringed  
3                   instrument.

1                 17.      A case for housing and protecting a stringed wooden instrument that has a sound  
2                   board, a back, neck, strings, a bridge and an angulated lateral portion that connects  
3                   respective peripheral portions of the sound board and the back, comprising:

4                 a)         a pair of shells of rigid material including a lower base shell and an upper  
5                   cover shell half, each of the shells having a hard inner surface;

6                 b)         a plurality of links for holding the shells together in a closed position;

7                 c)         a protective liner that lines each of the shells;

8           d)       the liners including a first liner that includes a first section of material in  
9       the base shell that engages the instrument back peripheral portion and spaces the  
10      instrument back away from the inner surface of the base shell and a second section of  
11      material in the base shell that is positioned next to the periphery of the stringed  
12      instrument at its angulated lateral portion;

13           e)       the liners including a third section of material that is contained in the  
14      cover shell that engages the sound board peripheral portion in the closed position; and

15           f)       at least one of the shell liners having a first recess that is shaped to provide  
16      a void space that receives the neck and a second recess that is shaped to provide a void  
17      space that communicates with the instrument back over a large portion of its area so that  
18      the first liner contacts only the peripheral portion of the instrument back .

19.       The stringed instrument case of claim 9 wherein the links include at least one  
20      hinge.

21.       The stringed instrument case of claim 9 wherein the links include at least one  
22      closure clasp.

23.       The stringed instrument case of claim 9 wherein the shells are of a material  
24      selected from the group that comprises wood, metal and plastic.

25.       The stringed instrument case of claim 9 wherein third layer of material cradles  
26      only a peripheral portion of the sound board in the closed position and at least a portion  
27      of the angulated lateral portion.

28.       The stringed instrument case of claim 9 further comprising a plurality of clamps  
29      that hold the instrument back into contact with the first layer of material.

30.       The stringed instrument case of claim 9 further comprising at least one rack for  
31      supporting a stringed instrument bow.

- 1        24. The stringed instrument case of claim 9 wherein the third layer of material has a  
2 void space that is sized and shaped to receive the bridge of the stringed instrument so that  
3 no substantial load is transferred between a liner and the bridge.